

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

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DRAFTED BY: ARA/LA/PLC:RHMELTON

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P 192204Z NOV 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY

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PASS TO RICHARD J. BLOOMFIELD

FOLLOWING REPEAT BOGOTA 10191 ACTION SECSTATE INFO CALI MEDELLIN
18 NOV

QUOTE

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR OAS CO CU

SUBJ: REACTION TO QUITO CONFERENCE BECOMES MORE MODERATE

REF: BOGOTA 10142

1. THE BOGOTA PRESS, SUBSEQUENT TO THE MORE MODERATE STATEMENTS
OF FONMIN LIEVANO (REFTEL), HAS, IN MUCH OF ITS EDITORIAL COVERAGE,
EMPHASIZED THE NECESSITY OF SAVING THE INTERAMERICAN SYSTEM.

2. EL TIEMPO IN A NOV 17 EDITORIAL STATES THAT THE OAS SHOULD NOT
BE ALLOWED TO FALL APART, BUT RATHER SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED. THE
EDITORIAL CAUTIONS AGAINST HASTY, EMOTIONAL OVERREACTION AND
CITES THE OAS AS THE LINK THAT HOLDS THE HEMISPHERE TOGETHER.

3. FORMER FONMIN ALFREDO VAZQUEZ CARRIZOSA, WRITING IN THE NOV 17
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ISSUE OF EL ESPECTADOR, STATES THAT THE QUITO MEETING REPRESENTED

A CRISIS IN HEMISPHERIC RELATIONS. HE CRITICIZED THE US POSITION AT QUITO AS INCONSISTENT WITH US POLICIES OF DETENTE AND STATED THAT THE OAS WAS OVERLY DEPENDENT ON THE US. VAZQUEZ, NONETHELESS, EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE CRISIS WOULD LEAD TO A REVISION OF THE SYSTEM AND NOT ITS TERMINATION. HE CHARACTERIZED THE COLLECTIVE SECURITY ASPECTS OF THE SYSTEM AS "BASIC AND IRREPLACEABLE".

4. THE CALL FOR MODERATION IN THE BOGOTA PRESS IS NOT, HOWEVER, UNIVERSAL. EL TIEMPO, NO NOV 18, CARRIED AN EDITORIAL PAGE COLUMN ENTITLED "BURIAL WITHOUT HONORS". THE WRITER STATES THAT, A DECADE AFTER ITS FOUNDING THE ORGANIZATION BEGAN ITS SLOW BUT INEXORABLE DEATH. HE CHARACTERIZES THE OAS AS INCAPABLE OF SELF REFORM AND CALLS FOR ITS ABANDONMENT AND THE FORMATION OF AN ALTERNATE ORGANIZATION WITHOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE US. HE STATES THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS IS AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE PROPOSED SUCH AN ORGANIZATION.

5. COMMENT: THE MORE RESPONSIBLE JOURNALS IN THEIR EDITORIAL COVERAGE ARE NOW LARGELY CONCERNED WITH THE TASK OF SAVING THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM. THERE REMAINS, HOWEVER, IN THE WAKE OF THE QUITO MEETING, A STRONG CURRENT OF ANTI-OAS SENTIMENT, USUALLY FOCUSING ON THE US ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION. THE MAJORITY OF EDITORIAL OPINION, INCLUDING BOTH SUPPORTERS AND DETRACTORS OF THE OAS, ADVOCATES THE END OF CUBA'S DIPLOMATIC QUARANTINE. ACCORDINGLY WE EXPECT THE SMALL ANTI-OAS FACTION TO CONTINUE TO CITE THE QUITO MEETING IN SUPPORT OF THEIR POSITION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETINGS, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CollinP0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE255155
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ARA/LA/PLC:RHMELTON
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740335-0230
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741130/aaaaayxp.tel
Line Count: 90
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BOGOTA 10142
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <12 MAR 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REACTION TO QUITO CONFERENCE BECOMES MORE MODERATE
TAGS: PFOR, CO, CU, OAS, QUITO
To: SANTIAGO
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005